

(Washington, DC)— Today the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill by Congressman Paul Ryan and Congresswoman Gwen Moore that will temporarily suspend tariffs on two vital imports used by Milwaukee-based companies, Harley-Davidson and Johnson Controls, in the manufacture of their products. The short-term tariff suspension provided for in H.R. 4944, the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2006, will bring down the costs of these domestic manufacturers, allowing them to stay competitive and profitable while employing more citizens of Wisconsin. Harley-Davidson and Johnson Controls employ 4,000 and 2,500 workers in Wisconsin respectively.

“We need to help make our signature industries more competitive so we can keep good-paying jobs in Wisconsin,” said Congressman Ryan. “These taxes were making Harley-Davidson and Johnson Controls less competitive, and this bill will help them thrive in the world market.”

“It is absolutely essential that we support the companies that are native to Milwaukee and that have continued to make it their home. Harley-Davidson and Johnson Controls invest in our community by employing thousands of my constituents,” Moore said. “Suspending these tariffs will make these companies more competitive in the global economy, and will help keep them and their jobs here at home.”

Harley-Davidson Inc. was founded in Milwaukee in 1903 and is the only major motorcycle manufacturer in the United States. It is also the world’s leading seller of large displacement motorcycles. In its 103-year history, it has become a recognizable and significant part of our country’s cultural heritage. H.R. 4944 will waive a 4.4 percent tariff rate for the period of four years on the French-made truing machine used by Harley-Davidson to assemble motorcycle wheels. Currently the French company is the sole manufacturer of this truing machine in the world.

Johnson Controls, Inc. is a Fortune 500 company headquartered in Milwaukee. As the world’s largest producer of automotive interiors, Johnson Controls develops and produces seating systems, instrument panels, door systems, overhead systems, and automotive electronics. H.R. 4944 will suspend the 4.9 percent tariff rate through 2009 on the Austrian-made microphones used by Johnson Controls as part of its innovative voice recognition device and electronic telecommunication system used by major automotive manufacturers in the United States. The microphones can only be purchased from the sole world-wide manufacturer which is located in Austria.

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